

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 24, 25 and 28 are pending in the application, with claim 24 being the only independent claim. Claims 1-23, 26 and 27 have been previously cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 29 and 30 are hereby sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 24, 25 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,713,203 to Takada *et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,212,263 to Hann and U.S. Patent No. 2,910,008 to Weisenbach. Claim 24 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter recited in original claim 29, and claim 29 has therefore been canceled. Claims 25 and 28 depend from and add features to claim 24; therefore, these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 24. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 29 and 30 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 29 has been canceled and its subject matter incorporated into amended claim 24. Claim 30 has been canceled, rendering its objection moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Tracy-Gene G. Durkin
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 32,831

Date: March 30, 2006

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600

512492v1